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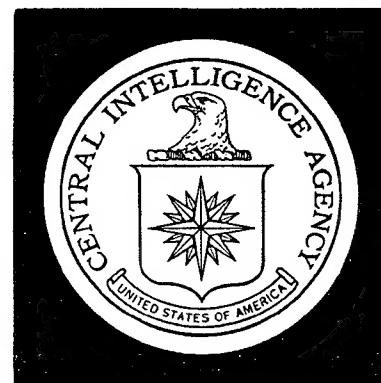
OSI-WS-19/69

5 May 1969

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DIRECTORATE OF
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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WEEKLY SURVEYOR

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WEEKLY SURVEYOR

OSI-WS9/69

5 May 1969

Directorate of Science and Technology

This publication is intended to furnish the intelligence community with a timely survey of significant current scientific intelligence. The items herein are based on selected incoming reports of all kinds received during the previous week. The comments represent the views of the Office of Scientific Intelligence and the Foreign Missile and Space Analysis Center and are coordinated to the extent possible in the time available within CIA but, being based on the material at hand, are subject to change on receipt of further information or analysis. We caution against action taken solely on the basis of the preliminary evaluations herein. Substantive questions concerning items in this publication may be addressed directly to the Surveyor Staff, OSI, CIA Headquarters, Langley. [redacted]
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Weekly Surveyor

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NUCLEAR ENERGY

Early Decision Expected in French Nuclear Power Program: France is reported nearing a decision as to what type reactor to build next. There has been an effective moratorium on new reactor commitments in France while the direction of further construction was determined. Several alternatives have been considered: An advanced gas reactor (AGR); an American type light water reactor; and a Canadian type heavy water reactor. France seems to have strong feelings against the AGR concept since they do not consider this to be a proven type reactor. Continued difficulties with the Chooz light water reactor would seem to make it a poor choice. The popularity of the heavy water type is gaining; hence, there is a favorable chance that they will choose the heavy water reactor for their next facility.

Comment: For some time there has been considerable pressure on the French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) by Electricite de France (EDF) to diversify the French nuclear power program to include reactors of a type other than the gas-graphite reactor. The choice of a heavy water reactor using natural uranium fuel, while preferable from the standpoint of possible sales to foreign countries, would necessitate the construction of additional heavy water production facilities to augment the 20 ton/year plant presently in operation. If they choose a light water reactor, obtaining fuel would present a problem; it would be necessary either to obtain enriched uranium or to obtain it from the US under safeguards. There is some indication that the French are seriously considering a pressurized tube, heavy water reactor as the next type to be utilized. Whatever the choice, the first reactor of the new type probably will be built at Fessenheim.

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